

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 6283

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECON EMIN EG

SUBJ: EXXON STUDIES EGYPTIAN URANIUM DATA

1. ED STANLEY EXXON/ EGYPT REPRESENTATIVE, AND ROBERT H. STEBBENS, MINERAL PRODUCING DEPARTMENT, EXXON, N.Y. CALLED ON AMBASSADOR AUGUST 16 TO DESCRIBE WORK WHICH STEBBENS HAS BEEN DOING ON URANIUM DEPOSITS IN EGYPT.

2. FOR BACKGROUND, STEBBENS SAID THAT EXXON HAD RESPONDED TO EGYPTIAN ATOMIC ENERGY CHAIRMAN GUBAILY'S REQUEST, WHEN HE WAS IN THE US FOLLOWING PRESIDENT NIXON'S VISIT TO HAVE SOME ASSISTANCE IN EVALUATING EGYPT'S URANIUM DEPOSITS. AFTER A WEEK OF STUDYING EGYPTIAN DATA AND A VISIT TO ONE OF THE SITES, STEBBENS HAS CONCLUDED THAT THERE IS NO BASIS FOR ANY RECOMMENDATION THAT EXXON FOLLOWUP POSSIBILITY OF URANIUM DEPOSITS HERE IN EGYPT. HE EXPLAINED THAT EGYPTIAN DATA IS BASED UPON EQUIPMENT WHICH THE EGYPTIANS PURCHASED FROM THE RUSSIANS BUT WHICH IS TOTALLY INADEQUATE FOR THE PROSPECTING OF URANIUM. AS STEBBENS EXPLAINED, GOE IS USING A "TOY" INSTEAD OF A PROFESSIONAL TOOL. THESE "TOYS" GIVE MANY INDICATIONS OF VARIOUS MINERAL SPECTRA WHICH INCLUDE URANIUM BUT BY NO MEANS GIVE ACCURATE INDICATION OF AMOUNT OF URANIUM PRESENT. AS A RESULT, ACCORDING TO STEBBENS, EGYPTIAN MAPS OF URANIUM DEPOSITS ARE LARGELY
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SIMPLY MAPS OF GENERAL ROCK FORMATIONS. STEBBENS

TOLD US HE DID NOT LAY THIS ON THE LINE WITH THE EGYPTIANS, HOWEVER, AS HE REALIZED THIS IS A SENSITIVE MATTER. HE HAS SUGGESTED HOWEVER THAT EGYPTIAN ATOMIC ENERGY PERSONNEL TOUR THE US TO SEE OUR OWN PROSPECTING OPERATIONS AND HOPEFULLY GET AN IDEA OF THE SERIOUS SHORTCOMINGS OF THEIR CURRENT EFFORTS.

3. IN ADDITION, STEBBENS INFORMED US THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF DEVELOPMENT OF URANIUM DEPOSITS AND DOWN-STREAM OPERATIONS AND FOUND THE EGYPTIANS NOTICEABLY LACKING IN UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMPLEXITY OF OPERATING MINERAL PROJECTS. EGYPTIANS ASKED FOR, AND STEBBENS WILL RECOMMEND THAT EXXON APPROVE, THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOME SAMPLE MINING CODES FOR EGYPT IF AND WHEN MINERAL DEPOSITS ARE DISCOVERED. IN THIS CONNECTION, STEBBENS SAID THAT EXXON WOULD ALSO LIKE TO STUDY THE PRECAMBRAIN ROCK OF EASTERN EGYPT AND SINAI BECAUSE TRADITIONALLY THIS PARTICULAR ROCK STRUCTURE HAS CONTAINED VARIOUS AND RICH MINERAL DEPOSITS.

4. COMMENT: WE FIND STEBBENS, WHO IMPRESSES US AS PROFESSIONAL IN HIS FIELD, MOST ENLIGHTENING ON SUBJECT OF EGYPTIAN URANIUM POTENTIAL. WE AGREE THAT WE SHOULD LET EGYPTIANS COME TO OWN CONCLUSIONS, HOWEVER,. ALSO CONCUR WITH STEBBENS PROJECT TO DRAW UP SAMPLE MINING CODE. EXXON PROMISED THAT THEY WOULD ALSO INFORM THE DEPARTMENT OF THIS INFORMATION.
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